

THE STUDENTS' VIEWS ON THE INDONESIA'S NON-MUSLIM LEADER'S PHENOMENON IN AISYIYAH UNIVERSITY YOGYAKARTA

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Abstract

The phenomenon of non-Muslim leaders in Indonesia has given pros and cons in society. Those pros and cons do not only appear among the general public but also appear among students. This study analyzes the views of Muslim students at 'Aisyiyah University Yogyakarta (UNISA) about the phenomenon of non-Muslim leaders in Indonesia. This research became important considering the last two issues that have emerged in the study of Islam in Indonesia, namely religious intolerance and moderation in few years. The type of this research is mixed qualitative-quantitative

field research. The research findings show that there are two kinds of views of UNISA Muslim students about non-Muslim leaders; First, Muslim students who disagree about non-Muslim leaders. They argue that choosing a leader must be based on his/her religion first. This group believed that Islam is the main non-negotiable requirement for someone who wants to run for a leader. Some of them even firmly stated that choosing a non-Muslim leader is categorized as *haram*. Second, Muslim students agree and do not object to the existence of non-Muslim leaders. The second group believed that religion is not an absolute issue as the requirement for a person who wants to become a leader. This second group argues that track records are more important than religion or ethnicity. The educational background of students also influences their views. Students with religious education backgrounds tend to be more accepting of differences. On the other hand, students who have a general educational background tend not to easily accept differences. Therefore, it can be concluded that the better a person understands religion, the more tolerant of differences he/she will be.

Keywords: Non-Muslim Leaders, Tolerance, UNISA Yogyakarta Students

A. Introduction

Since the issuance of the DKI Jakarta's General Election Commission (KPU) Decree Number:55/Kpts/KPU-Prov-010/Tahun2016, regarding the determination of candidate pairs in the 2017 Jakarta governor and deputy governor elections, Ir. Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, M.M. and Drs. Djarot Saiful Hidayat M.S. was officially announced as one of the participants in the 2017 DKI Regional Election. Since then, pros and cons began to emerge among the Muslim community regarding non-Muslim leaders. It is widely known that Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, or commonly known as Ahok, is a Chinese descent who embraced Christianity. He was also involved in the missed-interpretation case of Surah Al-Ma'idah verse 51, where Ahok is considered to have insulted Islam. Therefore, it is not surprising that issues around race and religion are increasingly rolling in Indonesia. Ahok's participation as the candidate for governor of DKI Jakarta in 2017 has given rise to the Indonesian Muslim community views toward non-Muslim leaders; some communities reject non-Muslim leaders, but not a few also support it.

The phenomenon of non-Muslim leaders in Indonesia with a diverse community background, both in terms of ethnicity, language, and religion, has attracted the attention of many researchers. Therefore, researches on religious tolerance in Indonesia were born. The studies that have been conducted can be classified into two themes, namely: (1) Research that directly examines non-Muslim leaders, either literature research or field research. This first theme research has been conducted by M. Mujar Ibnu Syarif¹; M. Suryadinata²; Wahyu Naldi³; Ilham⁴; Rohmat Syariffudin⁵,

¹ H M Mujar Ibnu Syarif and Mujar Ibnu, "Memilih Presiden Non Muslim Di Negara Muslim Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam," *Jurnal Konstitusi*, no. 1 (2008): 89-111.

² M Suryadinata, "Kepemimpinan Non-Muslim Dalam al- Qur ' ā N: Analisis Terhadap Penafsiran FPI Mengenai Ayat Pemimpin Non-Muslim," *Ilmu Ushuluddin* 23 (2012): 241-253.

³ Wahyu Naldi, "Penafsiran Terhadap Ayat-Ayat Larangan Memilih Pemimpin Non Muslim Dalam Al-Qur'an: Studi Komparasi Antara M. Quraish Shihab Dan Sayyid Quthb" (UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2015).

⁴ Ilham, "Respon Kelompok Musoin Terhadap Kepemimpinan Non Muslim: Studi Kasus Di Kelurahan Lenteng Agung Periode 2013-2014" (Syarif Hidayatullah, 2015).

Muhammad Ramadhan⁶, (2) Research on religious intolerance and radicalism in Indonesia. Recent research on this second theme has been conducted by The Wahid Institute⁷.

From the studies that have been mentioned, it seems that the research from The Wahid Institute correlates with the research theme that the author is currently doing. The difference lies in the object of the research. The Wahid Institute took high school students who were focusing on intolerance and radicalism studies as the research object. As director of the Wahid Institute, Yenny Wahid emphasized that Muslims in Indonesia are the face of the world's moderate Islam because Indonesian Muslims are known to be able to live side by side with followers of other religions. Therefore, if there is a potential possibility for strengthening intolerance in Indonesia, it can be a big warning for Indonesian to be careful. The surveys' results from The Wahid Institute showed several data that were quite worrying. From a total of 1,520 respondents, 59.9% of respondents belonged to a hated group. The groups they hate including those with non-Muslim religious backgrounds, Chinese groups, communists, and others. From 59.9% of data, 92.2% disagreed if members of the groups they hate become government officials in Indonesia, and another 82.4% of them were not even willing to become neighbors of the hated group members.

The research findings from The Wahid Institute are interesting to be followed up. If the seeds of intolerance have started to grow among middle and high school students, then what about students who have entered college? This question becomes the starting point of why this research is deemed important. College students are the spearhead of the nation's next generation. The progress and decline of a nation are in the hands of college students. If college students as the next generation of the nation do not have good religious' attitudes and behavior, then what will the fate of religious harmony in Indonesia are in the future?

In article 37 paragraph (2) of Law No. 20/2003, it is stated that the compulsory education curriculum includes Religious Education, Citizenship Education, and Language. Religious education implies the goal of national education is to create religious Indonesian. The implementation of religious education in Higher Education (PT), in this case, Islamic education, according to Zuhairini et al., aims to: 1) form Muslim scholars who fear Allah; 2) instilling the Islamic faith in every student; 3) create worship students who are obedient and have noble character. However, in reality, many students are less interested in the Islamic learning model in the classroom, either because of the teaching methodology or the irrelevant learning materials. Therefore, many students tend to learn Islamic studies outside the classroom. In another hand, some students do not care at all about Islamic studies, and those who do not care tend to be passive. This is then allegedly able to give birth to the students' different religious attitudes and behaviors including the Muslim students' views on non-Muslim leaders.

The Muslim college students' views towards non-Muslim leaders can describe their attitudes and religious behavior which are influenced by several factors that trigger the emergence of their views about non-Muslim leaders. According to Robert

⁵ Rohmat Syariffudin, "Pengangkatan Pemimpin Non Muslim dalam Al-Qur'an: Studi Penafsiran M. Quraish Shihab Dalam Tafsir al-Mi'sbāh." (UIN Walisongo, 2016).

⁶ Muhammad Ramadhan, Bambang Saputra, and Adhia Nugraha, "Appointing Non Muslim Leadership Based On Fiqh Siyasah Perspective And The Implementation In Indonesia," *International Journal on Language, Research And Education Studies* 4, no. 1 (2020): 104-117.

⁷ The Wahid Institute, *Laporan Tahunan Kebebasan Beragama / Berkeyakinan Dan Intoleransi 2014 The Wahid Institute* (Jakarta: The Wahid Institute, 2014).

H. Thouless, several factors can influence the development of a person's religious attitude, they are: 1) Social factors, namely the influence of education or teaching and various social pressures; 2) Experiences that help influence religious attitudes, especially experiences regarding various natural factors namely beauty, harmony, and goodness, as well as experiences regarding moral conflict, and religious emotional experiences; 3) Factors that arise wholly or partly from unmet needs, especially the needs for security, love, self-esteem, and threats; 4) Intellectual factors which include various verbal thought processes⁸.

Those factors play a strategic role in shaping one's religious attitude which leads to their views toward Non-Muslim leaders. However, these factors are tentative, which means they can change over time. The tentative nature of these factors is becoming the background of this research. This research is important to do because the college students' views about non-Muslim leaders can describe a student's religious attitudes and behavior. By knowing the behavior and religious attitudes of the college students, it will also reveal to what extent students have an attitude of tolerance in religion. In addition, the results of this study are also expected to reveal intolerance and radicalism among students. The research questions in this study are: (1) What are the views of Muslim students about non-Muslim leaders; (2) What are the factors behind the emergence of Muslim students' views on Non-Muslim leaders.

This research was taken at one of the public universities in Yogyakarta. The research location was chosen because Yogyakarta is one of the cities of education in Indonesia; In addition, according to the findings from Ma'arif Institute's research which has released the Islamic City Index (IKI), it has placed Yogyakarta as the most Islamic city in Indonesia. The research from the Ma'arif Institute is certainly interesting to follow up, especially on how the views of the Muslim community, especially Muslim college students in Yogyakarta regarding the phenomenon of non-Muslim leaders. This research is mixed qualitative-quantitative field research using a multi-stage random sampling method. The subject of the research was 120 students of the 'Aisyiyah University Yogyakarta (UNISA). Data collection techniques in this study were in the form of questionnaires (multiple choice and open questions) and interviews. Data analysis was carried out through the rational, objective, and argumentative methods of data analysis.

B. The Muslim Students Views on Non-Muslim Leaders

The results of data analysis that has been carried out on 120 UNISA Yogyakarta students found that there are two types of Muslim students' views about the emergence of the non-Muslim leaders' phenomenon. The first view stated that Muslim students disagree with the existence of non-Muslim leaders. Meanwhile, the second view agrees and does not question the existence of non-Muslim leaders. The results of interviews with 120 students showed that 68% of them disagreed with Non-Muslim leaders and students who agreed with Non-Muslim leaders amounted to 33%.

Table 1. UNISA Yogyakarta Muslim Students' Views on Non-Muslim Leaders

No	Views	Total	Percentage
1	Agree	81	68%
2	Disagree	39	33%
TOTAL		120	100%

⁸ Robert H. Thouless, *Psikologi Agama* (Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, 1995).

C. Religion becomes the Main Reason

The student groups who disagree with non-Muslim leaders argue that non-Muslim leaders will harm Indonesian society, where the majority of the population is Muslim. The main reason for the group of students who disagree with non-Muslim leaders is the religious factor and the fact that Muslims are the majority of the Indonesian population. A large number of Indonesians embrace Islam, so for them, the leader must be a Muslim too. For instance, when the writer interviewed several interviewees, they thought as follows:

Because Indonesia's population is predominantly Muslim. I think if the leader is non-Muslim, it will unbalance from a religious perspective. However, when viewed from a non-religious perspective, then it is fine, for example, if a non-Muslim becomes a leader, and the leadership is good⁹.

In addition to the reasons for the majority of Muslims in Indonesia, Muslim students who disagree with the non-Muslim leaders' existence also hold fast to the sources of Islamic teachings, namely the Qur'an and Hadith. Some interviewees even quoted one of the surah in the Qur'an which they saw as proof for their choice. For instance, according to a student with the initial H said:

Because I am a Muslim, I will prioritize Muslim leaders. This is what has been explained in the Qur'an Surah Al-Ma'idah verse 51 and verse 53. I prefer a leader based on religion because religion is one of the pillars of human life which is reflected through faith, morals, and others. For me, non-Muslim leaders are not good because they can worsen our faith and our religion, especially if we follow non-Muslim leaders, we will get sin¹⁰.

Another interviewee also stated the same thing that the Qur'an and Hadith have already regulated the warnings and consequences of choosing non-Muslim leaders. Therefore, they argue that Muslims must follow the rules that have been set in religion. By the fact of the Indonesian population's majority is Muslim, of course, religion will be a separate consideration for voters in choosing a leader. In Indonesia itself, the issue of religion in the political world is still quite thick, for example, the case of Ahok who fell as the candidate for Governor of DKI Jakarta because of religious issues. From the experience of Ahok's failure, it is sufficient to illustrate that religion is still becoming the main consideration for Indonesian in choosing leaders. One of the interviewees with the initials NW expressed his opinion as follows:

I disagree with the existence of non-Muslim leaders because it has been explained in the Qur'an and Hadith regarding the law of Muslim or non-Muslim leaders. Therefore, in my opinion, choose a Muslim leader. And it is clear from the Muslim leader, by God willing, he will protect all of us (non-Muslim/Muslim), and if the leader is non-Muslim, it has not been proven that he can protect all of us¹¹.

From several interview data that have been presented, it shows that religious belief has quite influenced the presence of Muslim students' views or opinions towards non-Muslim leaders. Some of them even emphasized that "In the Qur'an, it has been explained that if we follow the chosen people, then in the hereafter we will become their followers". For groups of Muslim students who disagree with non-Muslim leaders, they prefer leaders based on their religion, not based on their ethnicity, education, and/or experience. Some students who disagreed with non-

⁹ Nuril (Pseudonym), July 9, 2018.

¹⁰ Hendri (Pseudonym), July 9, 2018.

¹¹ NW, July 9, 2018.

Muslim leaders said even more extreme statements. They stated that it is unlawful (*haram*) to elect a non-Muslim leader because choosing a non-Muslim leader, for them, is the same as being part of a non-Muslim itself.

For students who disagree with non-Muslim leaders, religious reasons are the main benchmark in choosing leaders, not others. Religion is a non-negotiable barometer as one of the requirements to be a leader. For Muslim students who disagree with non-Muslim leaders, they argue that by choosing a Muslim leader, there is a guarantee that the policies which will be taken in their leadership system are based on religious values.

Religion seems to be a guarantee that the leadership of a Muslim will produce pro-Islamic policies. Even in recent years, the issue of Jokowi's government policies which are considered as not pro-Islamic is often mentioned and has become the subject of sharp criticism in attacking the government. Therefore, it is not surprising that in the presidential election in 2019, the strategy used by Jokowi in winning the election tends to avoid such criticism. In this case, Jokowi chose Ma'ruf Amin who incidentally is a cleric. This is a strategy to avoid religious issues which are expected to still be used in criticizing the government. Therefore, it is not surprising that the presence of these non-Muslim leaders tends to be rejected by most of the Indonesian people who the majorities are Muslims. According to AFH who argued as follows "I prefer a leader based on his religion. Because by choosing a leader based on religion, the leader will regulate his leadership based on the Qur'an and Hadith"¹².

In line with AFH, the student with the initials WM also expressed his disapproval of non-Muslim leaders. For WM, non-Muslim leaders will not get Allah's guidance. Especially in leading the nation, it needs guidance and the pleasure of Allah. And the guidance and pleasure of Allah can only be obtained by Muslim leaders. Therefore, Islam is the main consideration in choosing a leader. WM stated as follows:

I don't agree with non-Muslim leaders, because I don't think Allah will guide non-Muslims. This is already written in the Qur'an. Religion is my top priority in choosing a leader. Because in my opinion, if someone has a good religious side, then his intellectual side will be good too, and he will know what is good and what is best for his people. And if the Muslim leader will surely get guidance from Allah. For me, non-Muslim leaders are not good because non-Muslims will not have knowledge of Islam, which automatically cannot understand Islam. However, if the leader is a Muslim, he can be neutral to all religions because the Qur'an has taught indirectly and provided knowledge about other religions¹³.

In their disagreement with non-Muslim leaders, students not only mentioned the Qur'an and Hadith as the main guidelines, but they were also able to mention the surah Al-Ma'idah verses 51 and 53. Surah Al-Maidah verse 51 which in recent years has indeed been widely discussed related to the issue that plagued Ahok. This verse seems to be the main and strong argument for not choosing a non-Muslim leader. The student whom the writer interviewed also mentioned this verse. When the authors try to explore the reasons why they do not agree with non-Muslim leaders, they mention that the Qur'an has provided guidelines for choosing leaders, including not choosing non-Muslims as leaders. The following is an excerpt from the author's interview with one of the informants:

Because I am a Muslim, I will prioritize Muslim leaders. This is what has been explained in the Qur'an Surah Almaidah verse 51 and verse 53. I prefer leaders based on religion.

¹² AFH, July 9, 2018.

¹³ WM, July 9, 2018.

Because religion is one of the pillars of human life which is reflected through faith, morals and others. For me non-Muslim leaders are not good. Because it can worsen our faith and our religion. And if we follow non-Muslims, we can get sin¹⁴.

In addition to verse 51 of Surah Al-Maidah, the student who did not agree with this non-Muslim leader also quoted the verse 57 of this Surah. For them, verse 57 of Surah Al-Maidah is a clear prohibition in choosing non-Muslim leaders. The verse above they understand textually without understanding *asbabun nuzul* (the cause of it came down). When asked what criteria they consider in choosing a leader, is it ethnicity, religion, education or experience? They answered:

I prefer a leader based on his religion. Because in my opinion, even though the leader has good education and experience, it does not necessarily have a good understanding of religion. Especially based on ethnicity, I'm afraid there will be problems in that matter. Therefore, in my opinion, it is not good if the leader is non-Muslim. In the Qur'an surah Al-Maidah verse 57 it has been explained that do not choose your leader from the disbelievers, who have been given a book before you. What's more, in modern times like today, many berate and deliberately insult religion or ethnicity¹⁵.

Another surah in the Qur'an which is cited as the basis for students who refuse to lead non-Muslims is Surah An-Nisa verses 138 and 139 about the threat of choosing an infidel as a leader. The student with the initials J quoted An-Nisa's letter verses 138 and 139 above which rejected non-Muslim leaders firmly saying:

Allah forbids Muslims to appoint infidels as leaders. Muslims who appoint non-Muslim leaders are those who have been separated from Allah's guidance and help. A Muslim who chooses a non-Muslim as a leader is a hypocrite. (Q.S. An-Nisa: 138-139)¹⁶.

Some of the data above shows that religion is the main reason for Muslim students who do not agree with the existence of non-Muslim leaders. For them, religion is the main and non-negotiable condition and choosing a Muslim leader is the same as carrying out religious orders. They also assume that the procedure for choosing a leader has been regulated in such a way in the Qur'an and Hadith, so that Muslims only have to run it by not choosing a leader who is contrary to the line that has been determined in Religion.

Table 2. Students Who Make Religion the Main Reason for Choosing a Leader

Group of Students	Attitude	Reason	Basis
Disagree	Refuse (68%)	They worried that religious background could influence policy making; the majority of Indonesia's population is Muslim; according to them Islam forbids.	- Q.S. Al-Maidah: 51 and 57 - Q.S. Al-Nisa: 138-139

D. Track Record and Education of Prospective Leaders is Preferred

The second view is that Muslim students agree with the existence of non-Muslim leaders. Most of them prioritize their educational background and experience (track record) compared to their religion or ethnicity. Indonesia has a drab and complex community background, both in terms of religion, language and culture. So it is not an obligation to choose a leader only from Muslims. Those who agree with non-Muslim

¹⁴ Winda (Pseudonym), July 9, 2018.

¹⁵ Sasmita (Pseudonym), July 9, 2018.

¹⁶ J, November 14, 2018.

leaders do not make religion a major consideration. According to them, whatever their religious background is, it doesn't matter as stated by NL as an informant, he said:

I agree and have no problem with non-Muslim leaders. Because in my opinion, the world does not belong to Muslims alone. We live with people who have their own religion which is certainly different. The important thing is that the leader's performance is good. However, it would be more grateful if they were Muslim, then it would be even better¹⁷.

Performance and loyalty are the main choices in leading for those who don't mind their religious origins. If the leader is honest, able to take responsibility for his leadership and is able to bring Indonesia to a better direction, why not? Those who agree with this non-Muslim leader prioritize education and experience. According to them, education is far more important than religion, as A, one of the author's informants, stated:

I don't mind if there are non-Muslim leaders. Because everyone has the right to be a leader as long as he treats Muslims and non-Muslims fairly and does not discriminate against religion. I also prefer leaders from their educational background. Because if the education is high, the knowledge possessed is also much more, so that leaders who have intelligence will be able to lead well no matter whether they are Muslim or non-Muslim. In my opinion, everyone with different beliefs deserves the opportunity to become a leader as long as he remains wise in making decisions in his leadership¹⁸.

Some of the statements above show that those who do not question non-Muslim leaders base their opinions on educational background, and that are much more important than just religion or ethnicity. Leaders who have a fair and wise attitude are far more important than those who only have their religious background. Other informants argued that:

Leaders are not only seen from their religious status, but also from their daily actions (morals). We can also judge a leader by how much he does well and how his experience in leading is much more important than judging them from just ethnicity, religion and education. The factors that I mentioned earlier do not determine the quality of the leader. Good or bad leaders can only be seen by the results of their work¹⁹.

According to a group of students who don't mind non-Muslim leaders, the above statement also shows that it is the performance of a leader that is the measure of whether the leader is good or not. They also see that ethnicity, religion and education are not determinants of quality in leadership. This statement was also later put forward by another informant, DF, he stated that:

Yes, I agree with the existence of non-Muslim leaders. In my opinion, regardless of religion, it is okay to be a leader if the performance is good, wise, and has a leadership spirit. I am one of those people who prefer leaders based on their educational background and experience in leading. In my opinion, people who are educated and experienced must have mature knowledge and can be wiser. There is nothing wrong with choosing a non-Muslim leader if the performance is good and can bring good development to those around him. Seeing, judging, even prohibiting non-Muslims from becoming leaders because religion or ethnicity is the same as discriminating against that person and we don't respect the rights of others to be leaders²⁰.

The interview data strongly indicates that students who do not mind the existence of non-Muslim leaders make performance and experience (track record) the main consideration in choosing a leader. According to them, one's religion does not

¹⁷ NL, July 9, 2018.

¹⁸ A, July 9, 2018.

¹⁹ Nurman (Pseudonym), July 9, 2018.

²⁰ DF, July 9, 2018.

guarantee and influence the performance of a leader. Supported by the condition of the pluralistic and pluralistic Indonesian society, this attitude can also arise because they are traumatized and fed up with the facts that have existed so far. Ironically, many Islamic leaders and parties are caught in the vortex of corruption. Starting from the corruption case of hajj funds, the procurement of the holy book of the Koran, and the general chairman of an Islamic party who stumbled on a corruption case. On the other hand, non-Muslim leaders have emerged with good performance and track records in leading so that they are considered quite satisfactory for the people of Indonesia. So it is natural that they are psychologically traumatized by campaign promises which are then denied and betrayed which makes them act like that.

The Indonesian state which is compounded by the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity) based on Pancasila is also the reason they accept non-Muslim leaders. They base the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* as strong evidence that all people in Indonesia, including non-Muslims have the same opportunity to advance and build the Indonesian nation. The religious background of a leader is not a problem as stated:

Our country adheres to the Pancasila ideology and it has been written in the first precept "Belief in One Supreme God". So to choose a leader does not have to be from Islam. After all, if we force the leaders to be Muslim, they will not necessarily be able to carry out the mandate. In my opinion, every leader has their own shortcomings and if one of the shortcomings is because they are not Muslim, we still have to accept and respect that²¹.

Another informant, SPS, also expressed his opinion about non-Muslim leaders. According to him, there is nothing wrong with supporting and choosing non-Muslim leaders who can advance and build the nation well. The motto of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* is also the main reason why he expressed this attitude. He expressed his opinion as follows:

*I think it's the same for Muslim and non-Muslim leaders. As long as they can advance and can lead well. Indonesia was founded on the basis of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, various cultures and various religions, so it is not only Islam²². The important thing is that the leader can unite this diversity, a leader who understands tolerance, and does not discriminate between culture, language and religion and is open-minded²³.*

The motto of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, which is owned by the Indonesian people, is enough to be considered by the informants not to question non-Muslims as leaders. According to them, the slogan illustrates differences that still have one goal and should be considered in addressing the emergence of the phenomenon of non-Muslim leaders. This motto should also be able to make the Indonesian people aware that our nation is not only a nation of one ethnicity and one religion. This is what is realized by Muslim students who do not mind Non-Muslims becoming leaders in Indonesia which has Muslim as majority.

Table 3. Track Record and Education of Prospective Leaders is Preferred

Group of Students	Attitude	Reason	Basis
Agree	Accept (33%)	Prioritizing track record; educational background; fair; integrity; Trust; many corrupt Muslim leaders; non-Muslims are more tolerant; Human rights to be a leader	- <i>Bhinneka Tunggal Ika</i> - Pancasila - Democracy

²¹ XYZ, November 14, 2018.

²² SPS, November 14, 2018.

²³ R, November 14, 2018.

E. Religious Attitudes and the Future of Religious Tolerance in Indonesia

The religious attitude of Muslim students is a reflection of the future of religious diversity in Indonesia. However, the future of the Indonesian nation is in the hands of the younger generation as the nation's successor. As a nation with a Muslim majority population, this is certainly a challenge. If the younger generation has a good education and understanding of religion, then this will bring fresh air and hope for a good future for the Indonesian people. On the other hand, if education and religious understanding are inadequate, or even wrong, then it is not impossible that it will endanger and threaten the harmony and unity of the Indonesian nation. Here the role of the government and educational institutions, especially religious education institutions, has a strategic role in supervising and shaping the religious attitudes of the younger generation. Only education can shape and change a person's character and personality.

Although the world continues to change and develop, it turns out that religion still plays an important role in influencing people's attitudes. Religion can even control and direct a person to do good things. So, understanding religion properly and correctly is very important. Understanding one's religion can even give rise to Muslim students' views on non-Muslim leaders. Their religious attitude does not necessarily form without any underlying factors. At least there are several factors behind the emergence of Muslim students' views on non-Muslim leaders: religious education background, family role, environment and media influence.

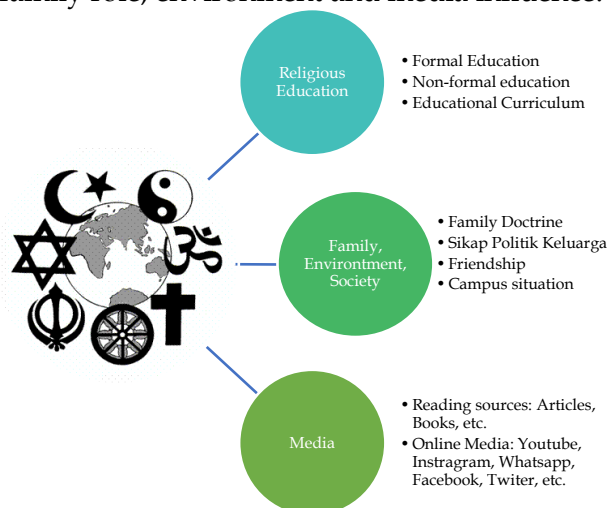


Figure 1. Factors behind the Emergence of Muslim Students

1. Religious Education

It's undeniable that a person's educational background or religious understanding will shape his mindset. The better the education, the better the way of thinking. Law number 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system states that national education functions to develop capabilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation in order to educate the nation's life. National education also aims to develop the potential of students so that they become human beings who believe and are devoted to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens²⁴. The statement of the law clearly states that education has an important role in developing abilities and shaping one's character. In many cases, the

²⁴ Undang-undang No.20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional & Undang-undang Nomor 14 Thn. 2005 tentang Guru dan Dosen (Visimedia, 2009).

level of education greatly affects a person's stock of knowledge²⁵. Even a person's obedience both in the religious and non-religious fields is also influenced by his educational background. This study also found that the educational background of Muslim students also greatly influenced their views of non-Muslim leaders. This is confirmed by Al Makin who stated that religious people cannot give up their religious interests for democracy, statehood, and socialization²⁶. Furthermore, Al Makin stated that religion is a cheap, easy, and effective political tool in politics in Indonesia²⁷. Luthfi Assyaukanie also said that religion is a political tool²⁸. In fact, in some countries religion is used as a political instrument²⁹.

This is confirmed by Al Makin stating that religious people could not give up their religious interests for democracy, statehood, and socialization³⁰. Furthermore, Al Makin stated that religion was a cheap, easy, and effective political tool in politics in Indonesia³¹. Luthfi Assyaukanie also said that religion was a political tool³². In fact, in some countries religion was used as a political instrument³³.

This study concludes that Muslim students who had minimal religious education background tended to disagree with the existence of non-Muslim leaders. The religious background of a leader was very decisive for them. On the other hand, Muslim students who had a good religious' education background tended to be less concerned about the existence of non-Muslim leaders. For them the track record was much more important, thankfully if Muslims were certainly better. This showed that a person's religious educational background would give birth to a religious attitude. The better one understood one's religion, the more one accepted differences. However, religious education that was responsible in the sense that it was only half-hearted would lead to a religious understanding that was also responsible. In addition, if their religious understanding was considered deviant, for example, radical Islamic understanding. Therefore, it is important for educational institutions to pay attention to the curriculum being taught. If the curriculum contains materials that lead to intolerance, it will also give birth to an attitude of intolerance. Do not let there be a curriculum that can give birth to extreme and violent religious attitudes.

Table 4. Disagreeing Student Education Background

No	Education	Number	Percentage
1	General	53	65%
2	Religion	22	27%
3	Unknown	6	7%
TOTAL		81	100%

²⁵ Mintarti Rahayu, *Dinamika Strategik Wirausahawan Tionghwa* (Malang: Universitas Brawijaya Press, 2013).

²⁶ Al Makin, *Bisakah Menjadi Ilmuan Di Indonesia? Keilmuan, Birokrasi, Dan Globalisasi* (Yogyakarta, 2018).

²⁷ Ibid., 14-15.

²⁸ Luthfi Assyaukanie, "Religion as a Political Tool: Secular and Islamist Roles in Indonesian Elections," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 13, no. 2 (2019): 454-479.

²⁹ Jaco Beyers, "Religion as Political Instrument: The Case of Japan and South Africa," *Journal for the Study of Religion* 28, no. 1 (2015): 142-164.

³⁰ Al Makin, *Bisakah Menjadi Ilmuan Di Indonesia? Keilmuan, Birokrasi, Dan Globalisasi*.

³¹ Ibid., 14-15.

³² Assyaukanie, "Religion as a Political Tool: Secular and Islamist Roles in Indonesian Elections."

³³ Beyers, "Religion as Political Instrument: The Case of Japan and South Africa."

Table 5. Agreed Student Education Background

No	Education	Number	Percentage
1	General	22	56%
2	Religion	14	36%
3	Unknown	3	8%
TOTAL		39	100%

The table above shows that the educational background of Muslim students also influences their views of non-Muslim leaders. Students rejected Non-Muslim leaders who had a general educational background were 65% while those with a religious education background were 27%. Then students accepted non-Muslim leaders who had a general educational background were 56% and those with a religious education background were 36%. From this data it can be concluded that students with religious education backgrounds tended to be more receptive to differences. On the other hand, students who had a general educational background tended not to easily accept differences.

2. Family Role

Families also have a strategic role in shaping students' religious attitudes. Not a few students whose religious ways follow their parents. The same goes for his political stance. Most of the informants I met admitted that in choosing a leader or in politics they tended to follow the family³⁴. If the family chooses a certain color, then the child must also follow the color that has been chosen by his family so that the political choices of his parents tend to be followed by his children. This is the role of the family who has an important position in the political or religious attitudes of their children. This study also found that Muslim students who disagreed with the phenomenon of non-Muslim leaders tended to follow their parents' orders to keep choosing Muslim leaders. This shows that parents and family play a very important role in giving birth to Muslim students' views of non-Muslim leaders. Parents have a role in shaping students' religious attitudes. This is in line with the hadith of the Prophet "No one is born except in his fitrah (Islam). It was his parents who made him a Jew, Christian or Magian".

The above hadith shows how the education of parents for their children will determine their future. The role of parents is very strategic in instilling religious values. Even the values of democracy and the state. Therefore, education in the family environment has a major influence on children's religious attitudes in the future. Moreover, the education system is doctrinal and authoritarian. A few children whose religious ways and attitudes follow the pattern taught by their parents. One of the students when the writer interviewed admitted that his political attitude was in accordance with his parents' orders. His parents forbade his son in choosing a non-Muslim leader. Parents ordered to be able to choose a Muslim leader. Thus, it can be concluded that education in the family environment greatly determines the religious attitude of Muslim students. Even political attitudes are also influenced by his family.

3. Environment and Association

The environment and association in which a person lives also could not be denied an influence on his religious attitude. Environment and association greatly determined a person's character. If a person hung out with people who liked to

³⁴ Resita (Pseudonym), July 9, 2018.

gamble, drink, do drugs and so on, then gradually he would be easily influenced. Vice versa. If he hung out with good friends, then he would also be influenced to be good. If the environment was hard Islam, then he would be formed as a hard Islam. If the environment instilled polite Islamic values, then he would transform into a polite Muslim. For students, the campus environment also greatly influenced students' religious attitudes. In addition, in recent years, the phenomenon of using the veil among students, especially in Yogyakarta, has become an interesting thing to observe³⁵.

On one occasion, the author interviewed one of the students who wore a veil. They admitted that they tended to follow the invitation of their friends who had previously used the veil. They also had a community of veil users. In addition, they also had a group of Islamic studies that was more closed in nature³⁶. Initially they were invited to join in an Islamic study. But the way to invite them was personally through short messages such as SMS or WA. Then they began to be introduced to their ideology, such as how to dress and political attitudes. How to dress, for example, they were told to wear a veil. Then for his political attitude, among others, was to introduce the State Daulah Islamiyah (Islamic State) which applied Islamic law

This data shows how the environment and student association could affect religious understanding and religious attitudes. The climate or public space and the studies he attended while in college would also gradually shape his attitude of diversity. This is what is meant by an environment that has shaped the views of Muslim students towards non-Muslim leaders. This is in line with the hadith of the Prophet:

The example of a good friend and a bad friend is like a perfume seller and a blacksmith. The perfume seller may give you perfume, or you can buy perfume from him, and even if you don't, you still get a good smell from him. As for the blacksmith, it could be (sparks) on your clothes, and even if you don't you still get a bad smell of smoke.

The hadiths above are in line with the psychological theory which states that the environment and association greatly affect a person's attitude and behavior. If there is someone who has bad behavior, in psychological theory it can be said that it can be caused by the way he was raised and the environment that encourages his bad character³⁷. G. Stanley Hall mentions that the environment plays a major role in developmental changes in a teenager. Hall also believes that heredity interacted with environmental influences in determining individual development³⁸. From this psychological theory, the environment and association greatly affect a person's attitudes and behavior, especially in religious attitudes. This strengthens the author's opinion that the views of Muslim students about non-Muslim leaders are strongly influenced by their environment and association.

4. The Role of Media

In this millennial era, it is undeniable that the media has a big enough role in influencing someone³⁹. The media have a big influence on a person's religious

³⁵ Dwi Retno Cahyaningrum and Dinie Ratri Desiningrum, "Jiwa-Jiwa Tenang Bertabir Iman: Studi Fenomenologi Pada Mahasiswa Bercadar Di Universitas Negeri Umum Kota Yogyakarta," *Empati* 6, no. 3 (2018): 278-96.

³⁶ Sa'adah (Pseudonym), July 2016.

³⁷ Carole. n.d. Carol Tavis Wade, *Psikologi* (Jakarta: Erlangga, n.d.), 20.

³⁸ John W Santrock, "Adolescence: Perkembangan Remaja" (2003): 10.

³⁹ M Nurdin Zuhdi and Mahfudz Masduki, "The Characteristics of Al-Qur'an Interpretation in Radical Islamic Sites in Indonesia," *Kalam* 12, no. 2 (2018): 395-428.

attitude⁴⁰. This can be proven by Priming Theory and Syringe Theory. Priming theory explains the process by which the mass media focus on some issues and not on others and this also changes the evaluation standards used by audiences to assess the social reality they face. Priming can also be referred to as the activation of media stimuli from one active thought connected to another thought in the brain⁴¹. In addition, this theory also explains that the media encourages the formation of thoughts that are connected to what is displayed in the media itself. For example, there is a tendency to imitate violent scenes shown in the media to other people in the real world⁴².

In addition to Priming theory, Syringe theory can also be used to explain the role of the media in influencing and shaping one's character, especially in religion. It is recorded in history that the newspaper published by William Randolph Hearst had resulted in a war between the United States and Spain in 1898. The newspaper reported that the sinking of the United States warship named Maine, in Havana Harbor was the work of the Spanish army with a very large and seemed excessive, war is unavoidable. After the sinking of the United States Navy warship in the port of Havana, political pressure from the Democrats and industrialists prompted the administration of Republican President William McKinley to fly the flag of war with Spain. However, it was later discovered that the sinking of the American warship was not due to an attack by the Spanish army⁴³.

From the example of the war between America vs Spain above, it can be seen how strong the influence of the media in encouraging changes in the human mind, with such a great impact and process as a hypodermic needle or a bullet that glides at high speed. In addition to the examples above, another clearer example is the speech made by leader Adolf Hitler, via public radio⁴⁴. Hitler's speech was ultimately a vital factor in starting the Holocaust in World War II.

Both theories emphasize how the role of the media is very important in changing and shaping the mindset of a person or society. The media is so powerful in changing the paradigm of thinking that it can move a certain person or group of people to act or behave in a certain way. Likewise, the religious attitude of Muslim students in universities. The role of the media in delivering *da'wah* is greater than just taking up arms on the battlefield. Through online Islamic media, spreading ideas and thought is more accessible. Online Islamic sites that are indicated to embrace radicalism also need special attention. The phenomenon of youth migration in recent years is also interesting to be observed. The phenomenon of the emergence of the youth migration movement is certainly very encouraging, but if the migration is not accompanied by adequate knowledge, it is worrying. This is because not a few later those who migrated only armed with an understanding of religion that was obtained instantly and online. They study religion through Google, YouTube, Facebook, and others.

This religious spirit has undergone a significant shift. From text studies to online studies. I once interviewed one student who used the veil, "Why are you wearing a

⁴⁰ Billy W Collins and Amanda Sturgill, "The Effects of Media Use on Religious Individuals' Perceptions of Science," *Journal of Media and Religion* 12, no. 4 (2013): 217-230.

⁴¹ Ilham Prisgunanto, *Praktik Ilmu Komunikasi Dalam Kehidupan Sehari-Hari* (Jakarta: Teraju, 2004), 246.

⁴² Wikipedia, "9 Teori Dampak Media," dalam [https:// id.wikipedia.org/wiki/ 9_Teori_Dampak_Media/](https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/9_Teori_Dampak_Media/) 15 Februari 2017.

⁴³ Baskara T Wardaya, *Indonesia Melawan Amerika Konflik PD 1953-1963* (Yogyakarta: Galangpress Publisher, 2008), 367.

⁴⁴ "Kumpulan Pidato Tokoh Dunia," *Kumpulanpidatotokohduniablogspot.Co.Id*, dalam *Kumpulanpidatotokohduniablogspot.co.id* 15 Februari 2017.

veil?" She replied, "I was invited by a friend, sir". "Are you reading a book or watching a video?" They replied, "I watch videos on YouTube". Then I checked the video, it turned out that the videos they watched were hard-line or radical videos. The spread of religious ideologies that tended to be violent or radical was already widely available on websites or online channels⁴⁵. These findings indicate clearly that online media has a tremendous influence on the religious attitudes of Muslim students. Religion today can be learned self-taught via the internet such as YouTube, Instagram, WA, FB, Twitter and so on. Religion today can be done without the guidance of a teacher. This is the online religious phenomenon in the millennial era. Today studying religion does not have to go to *pesantren* and other faraway places. Today religion can be learned easily and cheaply. But the impact is a partial and textual understanding of Islam. This is dangerous. It can be concluded that the media has a very big role in shaping one's religious understanding and attitudes. This includes shaping the views of Muslim students about non-Muslim leaders.

F. Conclusion

This study found that Muslim students who disagreed with the existence of non-Muslim leaders on average did not have a strong religious education background, such as Islamic boarding schools and Madrasah Aliyah. Students who did not have a strong religious background tended to have strong religious fanaticism. This was what was found in this study where Muslim students who on average disagreed with the existence of non-Muslim leaders were those who had a general education background, not religion. On the other hand, Muslim students who agreed and did not object to the existence of non-Muslim leaders had a stronger religious education background. Students who had a good understanding of religion tended to accept the presence of non-Muslim leaders. The findings in this study have indirectly given rise to the theory that the better a person's religious understanding, the more tolerant he is. The better one's religious understanding, the easier it is to accept differences. Vice versa, students who understand their religion less (responsible) tend to be intolerant and do not easily accept differences. The factors behind the views of Muslim students about non-Muslim leaders are religious education factors, the role of the family, the environment-association, and the role of the media. These four factors are quite influential on the attitudes and religiosity of Muslim students, especially regarding their views on non-Muslim leaders.

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⁴⁵ M Nurdin Zuhdi, "Kritik Terhadap Penafsiran Al-Qur'an Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia," *Akademika: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 18, no. 12 (2013): 209-234; Zuhdi and Masduki, "The Characteristics of Al-Qur'an Interpretation in Radical Islamic Sites in Indonesia."

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